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Identical letters dated 20 February 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and in response to the letter dated 10 February 2018 from the representative of the occupying Israeli authorities (S/2018/111), I should like to convey to you the following information.

The Syrian Arab Republic has sent many letters to the Security Council, the most recent of which was the letter dated 7 February 2017 (S/2018/100), in response to ongoing Israeli aggressions against its territory. In those letters, we repeatedly called upon the Council to condemn Israeli acts of aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, and to immediately take forceful measures to curb such acts and hold Israel accountable. The Syrian Arab Republic also warned Israel of the grave consequences of its ongoing aggressions and reaffirmed that Israel bears full responsibility for them.

The United States of America and certain Western countries protect Israel and provide it with cover for its repeated aggressions. Moreover, the Israeli leadership is certain that it will not be held accountable for its crimes. That is why Israel decided to carry out yet another attack against the Syrian Arab Republic. At dawn on Saturday, 10 February 2018, Israeli warplanes penetrated the airspace of the Syrian Arab Republic and struck a number of sites in the central and southern parts of the country.

In view of the above, and given that its warnings had fallen on deaf ears, the Syrian Arab Republic exercised its inherent and legitimate right to defend its people and sovereignty in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, in particular its Article 51. The air defences of the Syrian Arab Army responded to enemy F-16 aircraft, hitting several and bringing down one.

The claims and lies in the Israeli letter are nothing more than a fresh attempt to deceive and turn the facts upside down, and thus deny that Israel is responsible for its dangerous policy of aggression, practices State terrorism, continues to support armed terrorist groups and continues to violate Security Council resolution 350 (1974) concerning the separation of forces, as well as Council resolutions and international instruments concerning counter-terrorism. Like its predecessors, this attempt is doomed to failure, because everyone is now aware that Israel is a rouge entity that flouts international law, and that the threat Israel poses to international peace and security is no less dangerous than that posed by the terrorist organizations Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the Nusrah Front.

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The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that the repeated Israeli attacks against it have not and will not succeed in protecting the terrorist organizations that are Israel's partners and proxies. Neither will those attacks divert the Syrian Arab Army from continuing to make gains in combating terrorism and other Israeli tactics in many parts of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Syrian Arab Republic also reiterates that it will not hesitate to exercise its right to respond to Israeli aggressions and defend its territory, people and sovereignty by all the means sanctioned by the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international humanitarian law.

I should be grateful if these identical letters could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative